

Left to right, top, Pork Tourtière, Tourtière à l'Alsace, Beef Tourtière; middle, Duck Tourtière, Beef

The upper crust in tourtière

Readers offer their tried-and-true family recipes

By JULIAN ARMSTRONG
Gazette Food Editor

Quebec's tourtière tradition is alive, well and as satisfying a holiday habit if it dates back four generations or a mere year.

This warming winter dish conjures up contented memories in both old and young *Gazette* readers, we discovered from the 40 recipes and recollections that were sent in from all parts of the Montreal area and such centres as Quebec City, Cap de la Madeleine, Deux Montagnes, Richmond, Stanstead and Sherbrooke.

"I can't eat bought tourtière," wrote Cheryl Berger, 21, of Dollard des Ormeaux. "I wait for every winter for one reason alone — to eat home-baked tourtière," she added, enclosing her family's three-generation recipe she took with her when she left home.

Ingredients in this pie vary widely, we found. Most contained ground pork, often combined with veal or beef, and with potatoes or bread crumbs to mop up the juices. A few were made with poultry and game.

"I like to add a piece of moose meat and a rahhit or two," wrote Vida Agnesi of Douglstown, enclosing a tourtière of pork flavored with leeks along with the usual onions. And Mrs. J. Levie of Richmond included rahhit and venison in her list of meats to add to the basic pork.

Robert Sternberg of Cote St. Luc sent a kosher version using veal and fresh tomatoes. Several contributors had cut calories by cooling the cooked meat mixture, then removing the solidified fat.

Others revealed they provide contrast to the fat in either filling or pastry. Marie-Ange Drouin of Montreal adds lemon juice to her pastry.

Sources for this dish varied too, from grandmother's receipt books to neighbors to newspaper recipes dating back as far as 40 years ago.

Marcel and Denise Gauvin of Lachine enjoy a pie with a pastry that came originally from a chef on Canadian National trains, and a meat mixture flavored with herbs and soy sauce. Estelle Katz of Ville St. Laurent remembers acquiring her recipe many years ago from a new

Tourtière à l'Alsace Monique Gopal, Chateauguay

Early settlers who came to Quebec from Alsace were responsible for the first local tourtières, or tarts, writes Monique Gopal, who acquired this recipe from her late father, a pastry chef in Colmar, Alsace, France.

The meat mixture is marinated, placed raw in the puff pastry crust and flavored with the addition of chicken livers. One taster was reminded of a lean, light pate, another called it "the quiche of tourtières."

- 250 g ground veal (½ pound)
- 250 g ground pork (½ pound)
- 250 g ground beef (½ pound)
- 185 mL Sylvaner Alsatian or Riesling wine
- 2 dry shallots or 3 medium onions
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil (30 mL)
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour (30 mL)
- Salt, pepper
- Fresh, chopped parsley
- 3 chicken livers (optional)
- 2 pounds puff pastry (1 kg)*
- 1 egg yolk

The day before baking the tourtière, marinate the veal, pork and beef in the wine covered in the refrigerator.

When ready to make the tourtière heat 2 tablespoons oil in large, heavy frying pan. Chop shallots or onions finely and saute in hot oil until soft and glazed. Add eggs, flour, salt, pepper and parsley, and mix well.

Roll out one pound (500 g) of the pastry (*Gopal buys it at Kosher Quality Bakery, 5855 Victoria Ave., Montreal) into a circle measuring about 29 cm (11½ inches).

Arrange in black, metal, 25-cm

(10-inch) pie plate. Spread evenly with meat mixture. Slice chicken livers and arrange evenly over meat. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Roll out remaining one pound (500 g) pastry in a circle measuring about 25 cm (10 inches). Arrange on top of meat. Wet edges with water and fold outer edge under, pressing it to lower pastry.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F (230 degrees C). Mix egg yolk with one tablespoon water and a pinch of salt and brush all over pie. Decorate crust with leftover dough, as desired, and make air vents with a fork so steam can escape during baking.

Bake tourtière in preheated oven for 20 minutes, then lower heat to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C) and bake 25 minutes more. Serve hot tourtière with a green salad, and a celery root salad, and Sylvaner Alsatian or Riesling wine.

Pork Tourtière

Kethleen Fisel Pinneau
Ousbec City

This recipe was bequeathed to Pinneau, who came from the Lower St. Lawrence region, some 40 years ago. The gift of an aunt who was considered a Cordon Bleu cook, its flavoring has been altered somewhat to suit her family.

- 1½ pounds ground pork (625 g)
- ½ to ¾ cup cold water (125 to 175 mL)
- ½ cup finely chopped onions (125 mL)
- ¼ cup finely chopped celery (50 mL)
- 1 teaspoon pepper (5 mL)
- 1 bay leaf
- ¾ teaspoon savory (2 mL)
- ¾ teaspoon rosemary (1 mL)
- ¾ teaspoon grated nutmeg (1 mL)

Pinch cinnamon
¼ cup rolled oats
Pastry for 2-crust pie (23 cm)

In a large, heavy frying pan and cold water. When it reaches a boil, add onion, pepper, bay leaf, savory, nutmeg and cinnamon over medium heat for half hour, then cooking salt.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C). Add the meat mixture and cook for another couple of minutes. Add 1 cup (230 mL) pie pan water, add meat mixture, and bake until done.

Cut air vents in top crust as desired. Bake in oven for 15 minutes, then heat to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C) and bake another 25 minutes until done.

Beef and Pork Tourtière

Mergo Peterson, Pointe

Submitted by a former teacher who has enjoyed them for more than 30 years, this recipe has become a favorite with children, some of whom have introduced it into French-speaking homes. "They are now making them at Christmas instead of French tourtière," writes:

- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- ½ cup chopped carrots (50 mL)
- 2 carrots, pared, and 2 pounds minced pork (250 g)
- ½ pound minced beef (250 g)
- 1 cup fresh bread crumbs (250 mL)

Expert tips on making memor

Home economist Labelle offers her tip on turning out a tourtière to remember.

- Meat with 20 to 25 per cent fat gives the best texture although most

possibility of a dry pie since frozen meat usually loses natural juices as it thaws. Extra seasonings can disguise the loss of meat flavor.

- Cool the meat mixture comple

than the inner part. You protect the rim with an aluminum collar.

- A thick rim to the longer to cook, so the

ouitière; middle, Duck Tourtière, Beef and Pork Tourtière, Spiced Tourtière; bottom, Tourtière Maison.

Just in tourtière tradition

and true family recipes for this Quebec-style treat

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d mixture. Slice chicken
and arrange evenly over
Sprinkle with salt and pep-

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heat oven to 450 degrees F
(220 degrees C). Mix egg yolk with
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d brush all over pie. Decorate
with leftover dough, as de-
and make air vents with a fork
m can escape during baking.
Tourtière in preheated oven
minutes, then lower heat to
degrees F (200 degrees C) and
15 minutes more. Serve hot
with a green salad, and a
cold salad, and Sylvaner Al-
or Riesling wine.

Pork Tourtière

Kathleen Fiset Pincus
Quebec City

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me, who came from the Lower
Provence region, some 40 years
the gift of an aunt who was
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suit her family.

1 pound ground pork (625
g)
to ¼ cup cold water (125
to 175 mL)

1 cup finely chopped
onions (125 mL)
¼ cup finely chopped celery
(50 mL)
1 teaspoon pepper (5 mL)
bay leaf
1 teaspoon savory (2 mL)
1 teaspoon rosemary (1
mL)
1 teaspoon grated nutmeg
(1 mL)

Pinch cinnamon
¼ cup rolled oats (50 mL)
Pastry for 2-crust, 9-inch
pie (23 cm)

In a large, heavy frying pan, add
pork and cold water. When mixture
reaches a boil, add onions, celery,
pepper, bay leaf, savory, rosemary,
nutmeg and cinnamon and cook
over medium heat for 1½ hours;
halfway through cooking time, add
salt.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F
(220 degrees C). Add the rolled oats
to meat mixture and cook, stirring,
for another couple of minutes. Line
a 9-inch (23 cm) pie pan with pastry,
add meat mixture, and cover with
pastry.

Cut air vents in top crust and de-
corate as desired. Bake in preheated
oven for 15 minutes, then reduce
heat to 400 degrees F (200 degrees
C) and bake another 25 minutes or
until done.

Beef and Pork Tourtière

Margo Peterson, Points du Lac

Submitted by a former Mont-
realer who has enjoyed it for more
than 30 years, this recipe has be-
come a favorite with Peterson's
children, some of whom have mar-
ried into French-speaking families.
"They are now making this meat pie
at Christmas instead of the original
French tourtière," the owner
writes.

2 onions, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, finely
chopped
¼ cup chopped celery (125
mL)
2 carrots, pared, shredded
2 pounds minced steak (1
kg)
½ pound minced lean pork
(250 g)
1 cup fresh breadcrumbs
(250 mL)

1 teaspoon Herbes de
Provence (5 mL)*
1 teaspoon salt (5 mL)
¼ teaspoon pepper (1 mL)
½ cup grated Parmesan
cheese (125 mL)
¼ cup finely chopped fresh
parsley (50 mL)
Pastry for 2 9-inch
(23-cm) double-crust pies
Vinegar*

Using large, heavy frying pan,
add meat, onions, garlic, celery and
carrots and cook until meat has lost
its pink tint.

Add bread crumbs, Herbes de
Provence (*sold to specialty food
shops in jars covered with red and
white checked cotton), salt, pepper,
cheese and parsley and mix gently,
but thoroughly.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F
(230 degrees C). Line two 9-inch (23-
cm) pie plates with pastry and di-
vide meat mixture evenly between
the two. Cover with top crust, seal,
cut hole in centre to let steam es-
cape.

Brush tops with vinegar (*malt,
wine or apple cider vinegar), place
on bottom rack of preheated oven
and bake for 15 minutes. Lower heat
to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C),
move pies to middle rack and bake
for 35 to 40 minutes more, or until
pastry is golden brown. Makes two
tourtières.

Duck Tourtière

Mrs. C. Maisonneuve
Tarrace Veudreuil

The most elaborate and surprising
tourtière of those submitted, this
recipe contains so much sauce that
it is first cousin to a deep-dish meat
pie. The sauce is rich to natural gel-
atine, so could well be served cold.
It was given to Maisonneuve by a
close family friend many years
ago.

1 large duck (about 2 kg or

4½ pounds)
2 tablespoons cubed salt
pork (30 mL)
1 large onion, minced
2 cups chicken consomme
(500 mL)
Wefer
½ cup browned flour (125
mL)*
1 cup cold water (250 mL)
½ teaspoon dried savory (2
mL)
¼ teaspoon ground cloves
(1 mL)
¼ teaspoon cinnamon (1
mL)
¼ teaspoon nutmeg (1 mL)
Biscuit-type Pastry (see
recipe)

Clean duck and cut into pieces.
Render salt pork and use to fry duck
pieces until browned on all sides,
adding onion and sautéing it along
with duck.

Remove duck and onion to large
heavy pot. Add chicken consomme,
bring to a boil and simmer until
duck is tender, 1½ to 2 hours, add-
ing enough water to cover every
half hour. You should have 3 cups of
liquid at the end of the cooking time.
Discard bones and skin. Let cool and
skim off fat.

Mix browned flour with cold
water and add to meat mixture (*to
brown flour, spread dry frying pan
with flour and cook, stirring, until
flour browns, or bake at 350 degrees
F or 180 degrees C for about 30 min-
utes). Let simmer for a few minutes
until liquid thickens. Add savory,
cloves, cinnamon and nutmeg, mix-
ing well.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F
(230 degrees C). Line 2-quart (2.5 L)
casserole with pastry. Add duck
mixture. Cover with remaining pas-
try, cutting vents so steam can es-
cape. Bake in preheated oven for 10
minutes, then reduce heat to 350 de-
grees F (180 degrees C) for 15 min-
utes, or until golden brown.

Pastry

2 cups all-purpose flour
(500 mL)
3 tablespoons baking powder
(15 mL)
½ teaspoon baking soda (2
mL)
6 tablespoons shortening
(90 mL)
¾ cup (about) sour milk

on making memorable meat pie

bility of a dry pie since frozen
usually loses natural juices
thaws. Extra seasonings can
lose the loss of meat flavor.
ool the meat mixture comple-

than the inner part. You can pro-
tect the rim with an aluminum foil
collar.

• A thick rim to the pie takes
longer to cook, so will affect over-

teaspoons water (10 mL) and crush
mixture on pastry, using a brush
with real bristles. A synthetic
brush will give you a streaky ef-
fect.